

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of monitoring at least one feature of a blast, the method comprising the steps of:
 - providing a detonator in at least one detonator hole region at a blast site to cause a respective shot of the blast;
 - prior to the blast, utilizing a blast control signal path extending between a blast controller and the at least one detonator hole region, to communicate blast control signals to the at least one detonator hole region;
 - during a period following start of the blast, utilizing a blast feature signal communication path extending from said at least one detonator hole region to communicate a blast feature signal relating to at least one feature of the respective shot of the blast to a blast feature monitoring station,
 - wherein a plurality of detonators are provided in spaced relation at the blast site and wherein each detonator is associated with a respective blast control signal path and a blast feature signal communication path, wherein each said respective blast control signal path comprises respective conductor arrangements connected to each of said detonators, said respective conductor arrangements branching from a main conductor arrangement connected to the blast controller, and wherein said blast feature signal is generated by at least one sensor which is connected to one of said main conductor arrangement and any of said respective conductor arrangements.
2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the feature is velocity of detonation (VOD) of a main charge initiated by the detonator.
4. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the blast controller and the blast feature monitoring station are provided at a common location which is remote from the blast site.
- 5-7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim ~~[[7]]~~ 1 wherein at least one sensor is located outside of any detonator housing.
9. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 6 to~~ claim 8 wherein the blast feature signal communication path comprises at least part of the main conductor arrangement.
10. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim ~~[[7 or]]~~ 8 wherein the blast feature signal communication path comprises at least part of the respective conductor arrangements to which the at least one sensor is connected, and a wireless link.

11. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1 comprising the steps of generating a monitoring signal in a respective conductor arrangement and sensing a change in a blast feature monitoring parameter of the signal as a result of the blast, to generate the blast feature signal.
12. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the monitoring signal comprises a first signal and a second signal, and wherein the blast feature monitoring parameter relates to a difference in corresponding signal parameters of the first signal and the second signal.
13. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the first signal is generated by a signal generator located at a remote blast controller and which is connected to the respective conductor arrangement by a main conductor arrangement and which is also connected to the blast feature monitoring station.
14. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the first signal is generated in the respective conductor arrangement by a signal generator located at the remote blast controller and wherein data relating to the change is transmitted from a sensor connected to the respective conductor arrangement via a wireless link to the blast feature monitoring station.
15. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the first signal is generated by a signal generator connected directly to the respective conductor arrangement and data relating to the

change is transmitted by a sensor connected to the respective conductor arrangement via a wireless link to the remote blast feature monitoring station.

16. (Original) A method of monitoring a feature of a blast, the method comprising the steps of:
 - providing a conductor arrangement connected to a detonator for providing blast control signals to the detonator from a remote blast controller and which detonator causes part of the blast;
 - generating a monitoring signal in the conductor arrangement;
 - sensing a change in a blast feature monitoring parameter of the signal as a result of the blast; and
 - processing data relating to the change for providing data relating to the feature.
17. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein the feature is velocity of detonation (VOD) of a main charge initiated by the detonator.
18. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 16 or claim 17 wherein the conductor arrangement is connected to the detonator to control the detonator.
19. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein the conductor arrangement comprises a pair of twisted conductors.

20. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein the monitoring signal comprises a first signal and a derivative signal of the first signal.
21. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 20 wherein the blast feature monitoring parameter relates to a differences between corresponding signal parameters of the first signal and the derivative signal.
22. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 21 comprising the steps of causing a signal generator to generate the first signal for propagation on the conductor arrangement, generating a derivative signal by causing a reflection of the first signal, and monitoring changes in the difference in corresponding signal parameters of the first signal and the reflection.
23. (Original) A method as claimed in any one of claims 20 to 22 wherein the first signal is generated by a signal generator at a remote blast controller which is connected to said conductor arrangement by a main conductor arrangement and which is also connected to a blast feature monitoring station.
24. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 22 wherein the first signal is generated by a signal generator at a remote blast controller and wherein data relating to the changes is transmitted from a sensor connected to the conductor arrangement via a wireless link to a remote blast feature monitoring station.

25. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 22 wherein the first signal is generated by a signal generator connected directly to the conductor arrangement and wherein data relating to the changes is transmitted by a sensor connected to the conductor arrangement via a wireless link to a remote blast feature monitoring station.
26. (Currently Amended) A system for monitoring at least one feature of a blast comprising:
- a detonator in at least one detonator hole region at a blast site to cause a respective shot of the blast;
 - a blast control signal path extending between a blast controller and the at least one detonator hole region, to communicate blast control signals to the at least one detonator hole region;
 - a sensor at the at least one hole region which is sensitive to a feature of the blast; and
 - a blast feature signal communication path extending from the at least one detonator hole region to transmit a blast feature signal relating to at least one feature of the respective shot of the blast to a remote blast feature monitoring station,
 - wherein said sensor is located outside of a housing of at least one said detonator, and wherein said sensor comprises a device connected to a conductor arrangement which is connected to said detonator.

27-28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) A system as claimed in claim [[27]] 26 wherein the sensor comprises at ~~lest~~ least part of a conductor arrangement connected to the detonator.
30. (Original) A system for monitoring a feature of a blast, the system comprising:
- a detonator for causing at least part of the blast;
 - a conductor arrangement connected to the detonator for controlling operation of the detonator from a remote blast controller;
 - a monitoring signal generator arranged to generate a monitoring signal in the conductor arrangement; and
 - a sensor for sensing changes in a blast feature monitoring parameter of the monitoring signal as a result of the blast.
31. (Original) A system as claimed in claim 30 wherein the sensor is located outside of a housing of the detonator.
32. (Original) A system as claimed in claim 30 or claim 31 wherein the signal generator is connected to the conductor arrangement by a main conductor arrangement extending between the conductor arrangement and the signal generator.
33. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 30 wherein the signal generator forms part of a blast controller.

34. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 30 wherein the sensor comprises a sensing circuit forming part of the blast controller.
35. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 30 wherein the sensor is connected directly to the conductor arrangement and wherein the data relating to the changes is transmitted from the sensor via a wireless link to a remote blast feature monitoring station.
36. (Original) A system as claimed in claim 35 wherein the sensor is connected to the conductor arrangement at a point where the conductor arrangement branches from a main conductor arrangement.
37. (Original) A system as claimed in claim 30 wherein the signal generator and the sensor are connected directly to the conductor arrangement and wherein the data relating to changes in the blast feature monitoring parameter is transmitted via a wireless link from the sensor to a remote blast feature monitoring station.